

Reflections of the 2014 SAF Sponsored Germany Study Tour -- Should SAF do more study tours?

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John Palmer, SAF Fellow and retired Professor of Forestry at Haywood Tech in North Carolina, organized the trip in conjunction with four German volunteers. Professor Marcel Robischon, a Forestry Faculty member of Humboldt University of Berlin, served as the tour guide and interpreter. Dr. Christoph von Rhöneck, a Schenck family descendant, organized the visits throughout the Odenwald where Dr. Schenck lived. The Baroness Francine von Finck coordinated forestland visits throughout Bavaria, plus her own estate during the first part of the tour. The Countess Dr. Christina Nesselrode hosted a special Rhine River cruise and visit to her son's large forestry properties, which specialize with hardwood management.

THRIVING FORESTS *The tour participants visited ten German forest landowners in the mountainous Bavarian and Odenwald regions, eight arboretums and several historical churches and castles. A special highlight was visiting Dr. Schenck's hometown of Lindenfels during its annual festival. Special arrangements during our stay in Lindenfels included a tree planting ceremony, and meeting the family of Dr. Carl Alwin Schenck, the founder of the Biltmore Forest.*



Germany has a highly developed forest industry. It was a fantastic tour. Truly, once-in-a-lifetime! Participants had the honor to see exceptional forest management and private castles that very few Americans have seen.

Forty SAF member participants met German forest landowners, their foresters and state foresters during July 24 – August 8, 2014. Key concepts observed were “close to nature forestry” and forests paying for themselves. Regeneration was natural, but species composition was guided toward wood that provided the highest revenue. The processes were natural, but the objective was to generate a profit.

